——The Loire, in the late inundations deluged the Orleans and Bordeaux line, sweeping away the station; covering the line with a vast lake between Amboise and Vauvray, and tearing away 100 yards of sleepers and chairs.

CENTRAL ORGANIZATION OF THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

This highly interesting work is now in rapid progress. For the present, if not for perpetuity, there is to be something like a two-fold centre in the metropolis, one at the Royal Exchange and Lloyd's, for behoof of the city and the mercantile world at large, and the other in the Strand, for behoof of the West-end, the legislature, and the general converse of the country with its metropolitan head. The busy work of laying down the wires between the station of the South Western Railway, at Nine Elms, and the grand Strand centre, has been begun. The nerve-like tubes are being run along Vauxhall-street, Kennington-lane, and Waterloo-bridge, towards the vital centre, where the wires from every railway telegraph are to meet, in one unbroken inter-communication between the most distant parts of the country. Every precaution is being taken to keep the wires dry, and to preserve their total isolation. They are bound with yarn, water-proofed, and enclosed in leaden half-inch tubes, two of which in succession, inclosing four copper wires, pass through a series of iron pipes, coated inside and out with heated pitch, as the exterior of the leaden tubes also are. The whole apparatus is sunk beneath the surface to a depth of about eighteen inches, and run along, as the ordinary gas and water-pipes do, like the nervous fibrils amongst the arteries and veins of the living body.

The Eastern Counties Railway Company are to extend their telegraphic wires in a similar way to the Royal Exchange and Lloyd's, so that instantaneous communication with Liverpool, and other points in the radius of the circle, will be forthwith established to that centre. Proofing posts are being erected at certain distances, in order to keep the wires in working order, and engineers are engaged in completing the electric wires along the branch lines from Ely, Peterborough, Stamford, and Syston, to Derby; and thence along the present Derby, Birmingham, and Manchester lines to Liverpool.

NEW BUILDINGS IN GLASGOW.

The National Bank and Stock Exchange, in Queen-street, Glasgow, forming one pile of building, are nearly completed, and, according to the *Glasgow Citizen*, produce a satisfactory effect. "The style of the architecture of the Bank is Italian, of the Venetian school, with Ionic columns and pilasters, having enriched angular capitals. The windows are arched, ornamented in alternate courses of vermiculated masonry. On the key stones of the front windows are carved, in *alto relievo*, masks, representing the five principal rivers of the kingdom; that over the entrance being intended to represent the Clyde. The Stock Exchange is of the Florentine school of Italian architecture." Mr. Gibson, of Westminster, is the architect. The ornamental portions of the work are by Mr. Thomas, the modeller employed at the new Houses of Parliament.

Mineral Wealth of this Country.—In the course of a lecture to the general classes of King's College, by Mr. Tennant, on mineralogical geology, the lecturer stated, that the annual value of the mineral produce of this country amounts to about twenty-five millions. Of this, 9,100,000*l.* is from coals, 8,400,000*l.* from iron, 1,200,000*l.* from copper, 920,000*l.* from lead, 400,000*l.* from salt, 390,000*l.* from tin, 60,000*l.* from manganese, 35,000*l.* from silver, 22,000*l.* from alum, 8,000*l.* from zinc, and 25,000*l.* from the various other metals, as antimony, bismuth, arsenic, &c.

Coal for Metropolitan Gas.—On an average during the darker months, 890 tons of coal are every day consumed in the metropolitan gas-works.

Toon Wood Admissible Free.—The above wood, the produce of Araeen, is decided to be a furniture wood, and to be added to the "free list."

IMPROVEMENTS IN HATFIELD HOUSE.

The recent visit of her Majesty to Hatfield House has directed attention to this interesting specimen of domestic architecture. It was erected in 1611 by Sir Robert Cecil, on the site of an earlier building, and is amply illustrated in Mr. Robinson's "Vitruvius Britannicus." The architect is unknown; Mr. Robinson ascribes it to John Thorpe. The expense of erecting it is said to have been no more than 7,631*l.* 11s. 3d., including fencing in two parks and other works. Some items from a record of the expenses will serve to shew the prices of materials and labour at that time.

	£.	s.	d.
Item, for 60 tunne of Caen stone, at 30s. per tunne	90	0	0
Item, for the making of 7 hundred thousande of bricks, at 7s. 9d. per thousande, besydes carriage	341	5	0
Item, for the cuttinge of 48 stone lyons, which stande on the open work of masonrye about the house, for xl. tafferils more, for the carvinge the pew heads in the chappell, the stone pedestells in the open worke before the house, the chimney-piece in the upper chappell, and the Corinthian heads which stand on the top of the stayrecase, on the North side of the house—all which comes to	130	14	2
Item, for the frett seelinge in the long gallerye ..... Item, for the architrave, freeze, and cornish in the Kynge's bedchamber..	48	10	1

During the last two years, the present Marquis of Salisbury has made many additions at the cost of about 30,000*l.* We avail ourselves of some particulars furnished by a correspondent of the *Morning Herald*, not pledging ourselves to the praise given.

The suite of rooms on the principal story are approached by the east staircase from the cloisters. It forms one of the greatest attractions in the interior of the mansion. The staircase communicates with the great hall on the ground floor. It is ascended by a flight of five landings, and occupies a space of 35 feet by 21 feet in dimension. The balusters are massive, and boldly carved in the Italian form, and above the hand-rail are represented various genii with musical instruments and other emblems. The ceiling exhibits a diversified taste, and the upper division is enriched by a very beautiful pendant in the Florentine style, all of which has been recently coloured and relieved by gold and silver enrichments. On ascending the staircase the first apartment entered is the great chamber, called King James's room. It is a noble apartment, being nearly 60 feet long by 27 feet wide, and is lighted from the east by three immense oriel windows. The noble owner has been lavish in his expenditure in the embellishment of this saloon, and it must certainly rank among the most gorgeous apartments in the kingdom. The ceiling defies description, so elaborate is the decoration, and the spaces alternating with the portraits are filled by panels in colours of the Florentine style, just finished by Mr. Sang and his artists. From that room is entered the gallery which extends the whole length of the southern front to the library. It is above 160 feet long, and 20 feet wide. At each end is an Ionic screen, the entablature and attic of which break the extreme length of the room, which is altogether so highly enriched with architectural ornament as to produce an imposing and unique effect. The ceiling especially displays a great variety of combination and intricacy in its numerous compartments, and is executed with masterly skill. The ground is now entirely gilt, the intersections being ornamented in colours. It is pronounced to be unrivalled in this country, and is only equalled on the continent by the celebrated ceiling in the same style at the royal palace, at Munich.

The great Hall, or as it is called, the Marble Hall, is a conspicuous apartment, from its noble proportions and the general character of its architecture. It is lighted by three bay windows rising the whole height of the hall, besides the oriel at the upper end near which the lord's table stood in the "golden days" of our ancestors. A massive carved screen runs the whole length of the hall at the east end, with an open gallery, highly enriched with carving, amidst which are introduced lions, forming part of the heraldic insignia of the family bearing shields of the cartouche form, on which are blazoned the family arms. The room is panelled with oak, and the walls lined with splendid tapestry lately brought from Spain. The parts under the galleries have been decorated under Mr. Sang's superintendence.

The chapel and a suite of ten rooms have been completed at vast expense by his lordship in the old baronial style, and each room differs, from the panelling being of various woods—some being of oak, walnut, ash, sycamore, &c.

ST. THOMAS'S CHAPEL, AT BRENTWOOD, ESSEX.

The chapel of St. Thomas à Becket, at Brentwood, is in a state of decay and neglect. Some of the mullions of the windows seem crumbling away. It has been completely stripped, and hardly any thing is left but walls, windows, and roof.

It consists of western tower (supporting a small spire of wood or slate), nave, and south chapel (built as a south aisle), under one roof, a well developed chancel, and north porch.

Exterior.—The tower is situated at the west end of the north side of the nave, the west side of the tower standing flush with the west end of the nave and south aisle. Close up under the parapet, on each side, are two ogee-headed lights, quite plain. These are the only windows in the tower, with the exception of two square insertions on the west side. The nave, has on the north, a three-light pointed perpendicular window, with good tracery and drip stone; and a plain dormer window. In the south aisle is a similar pointed window to that on the north. Here is also a plain four-centred doorway. At the west end are two buttresses, one against the tower, and the other at the end of the south aisle; between them is a small pointed window, now bricked up. The north porch is quite plain, and plastered up to the eaves, so that if there is any original work remaining, it is effectually concealed. The gable is of high pitch, and it is entered by a square-headed doorway. The chancel contains, on the north, a plain two-light pointed perpendicular window, with meagre tracery, and the jambs composed of large shallow cavettos; and a two-light square-headed early perpendicular window, with tracery and dripstone, and a plain dormer window. The east window is four-light pointed perpendicular, with tracery. On the south are two two-light pointed windows, the same as that on the north.

Interior.—As I said before, the interior has been completely stripped; hardly any trace of its originally sacred character remains. The floor has been levelled, and the chancel roof has been ceiled and whitewashed. In the south wall at the east end is a double piscina; the pillar or mullion which divided it is gone. One of the principals of the nave roof remains; it consists of horizontal tie-beam, with king post and struts. At the west end is a large gallery.

The only remain connected with the chantry altar in the south aisle, is a single cinquefoiled piscina at the east end. The origin of this is given in the historical particulars. The bell from the tower has been stored into the new church, which was built a few years back. There are no monuments, as burials and baptisms could only be performed in the mother church of South Weald. The chapel is now used as a school.

HISTORICAL NOTICE.

William de Wockendon * gave some lands in the parish of South Weald to the abbey of St. Osith, soon after it was founded; † and they were confirmed to them by Henry II.

In the fifth year of the reign of Henry III. (1221), a chapel was founded, and dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket, by David, abbot of St. Osith (for the convenience of his tenants at Cost Hall, as this manor was then called), with the consent of the Bishop of London, it being in his see; and the abbot and convent of Waltham, who owned the principal manor in South Weald. The chaplain was presented by the abbot of St. Osith.

Of this chapel there are no remains (with the exception of the piscina in the chancel), it

* Probably William de Ockendon, in this county.

† By Richard de Beaumeis, Bishop of London, in 1118, at St. Osith, 11 miles south-east of Colchester.

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